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DEPT FOR AIT/W, EAP/TC, INR/EAP

FROM AIT KAOHSIUNG BRANCH OFFICE

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SUBJECT: CAMPAIGN "DIRTY TRICKS;" THE KMT ASKS: "WHAT CAN THE DPP DO THIS TIME?"

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

REF: A) Taipei 2379 B) Taipei 1565 C) Taipei 1457 D) Taipei 1382
E) Taipei 520 F) 2006 Taipei 4152 G) 2005 Taipei 3793

¶1. (SBU) In southern Taiwan the greatest fear of the ruling DPP is always that its supporters will not come out to vote on election day due to apathy or disillusionment with the party. Conversely, the biggest fear of the KMT is that the DPP will launch a last-minute "surprise" to bring its voters to the polls. In order to minimize the effectiveness of possible last-minute DPP campaign tactics, the KMT Kaohsiung City office has compiled and is widely distributing a list of possible "dirty tricks" it claims the DPP might deploy to help it win the upcoming March 2008 presidential election.

Comment

¶2. (SBU) A key KMT LY member and advisor to Ma confirmed in Taipei that the party had been canvassing supporters for "ideas" but acknowledged that these were not necessarily based on either facts or analysis. He said that "once bitten by a snake, one becomes fearful of even a rope." Recently, the KMT's Organization Development Committee set up an "Election Dirty Tricks Research Institute" to collect suggestions from local KMT branches and individuals on possible "dirty tricks" that the DPP might play in the upcoming elections. On December 18 KMT Headquarters issued a list of 15 general types of tricks, which summarized the 143 specific tricks collected by the party. Most of the suggestions in the Kaohsiung list fall into the categories of the 15-point summary list prepared by KMT Headquarters. In addition to Kaohsiung, we have heard about other KMT branches, for example, Hsinchu, preparing similar lists of possible election tricks, but not necessarily for public distribution.

¶3. (SBU) Following is the Kaohsiung KMT-compiled list of alleged DPP conspiracies:

(A) Manipulation of Taiwan Identity: Broadcasting widely on the underground radio stations in southern Taiwan that KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou was born in Hong Kong and is not an "indigenous Taiwanese." This would mobilize "national identity" advocates to rush out and vote to protect Taiwan.

(B) Manipulation of Underground Bookies: Use bookies to influence and encourage bettors that placing money on the DPP Hsieh-Su ticket

is the safer wager.

(C) Creating Fake Traffic Accidents: Hire con artists or jobless people claiming to be Ma Ying-jeou supporters to create fake traffic accidents involving the DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh, his campaign aides, or even President Chen's motorcade to stimulate voter sympathy for a DPP presidential candidate "under attack" by the KMT.

(D) Creating Fake Poison Incidents: Hire con artists or jobless people claiming to be Ma Ying-jeou supporters to create fake poison incidents that affect Frank Hsieh or his assistants when they eat at local food establishments. This will stimulate voter sympathy for a DPP presidential candidate "under attack" by the KMT.

(E) Use of Magic or Witchcraft: Use religious magic or witchcraft to give Frank Hsieh special power to put a spell on Ma Ying-jeou while shaking Ma's hand. The spell would cause Ma to make mistakes or misspeak as he campaigns for the presidency. This conspiracy theory is based on Frank Hsieh's earlier allegiance to a powerful Taoist religious leader who was later arrested for fraud and embezzlement.

(F) Assassination Plot against Presidential Candidates: Replay the 2004 presidential election "3/19 assassination" plan to fake an assassination attempt on Ma Ying-jeou or Frank Hsieh. The DPP would then publicize the incident as a PRC conspiracy in order to force a suspension or postponement of the presidential election.

(G) Fomenting Chaos on Election Day: Use fake ballots to rig votes in KMT-ruled cities/counties to incite chaos or riots among the people and provide an excuse to hold a supplemental election.

(H) Releasing News about a Critical Illness of the First Lady:

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Release TV news of the hospitalization of the First Lady. This scenario would feature the First Lady telephoning from her ambulance cot on the way to the hospital in support of Frank Hsieh. Meanwhile, President Chen would continue diligently campaigning rather than accompany his ill wife in a last-minute attempt to inspire voters to turn out at the polls.

(I) Creating Hatred Between the Cross-strait People: Arrest or even shoot Chinese fishermen fishing illegally in Taiwan's waters to stir up animosity among Taiwanese and motivate them to come out to vote for the DPP.

(J) Generating Fears of Oppression by the U.S. and China: Prior to the election, use the UN referendum issue to provoke U.S. and PRC action by raising their concern over Taiwan independence. On the eve of the election, fabricate a kidnapping incident involving the DPP presidential or vice-presidential candidate (or their wives), leaving clues that would implicate the U.S. or China. This type of action would promote "Taiwan identity" and possibly lead to the suspension of the election or the establishment of martial law.

(K) Raise the "China Threat": Hold a military exercise to provoke China into a strong reaction. If China does not respond, the DPP would boast about its capability to contend with China. President Chen could also use this scenario to negotiate with the U.S. for political asylum to avoid being indicted after he steps down.

(L) Conviction of Ma and Hsieh: Manipulate the judiciary to convict Ma Ying-jeou and Frank Hsieh on current corruption allegations, leaving President Chen's favorite, Su Tseng-chang, to run against Vincent Siew and win the presidency.

(M) Restaging the Kaohsiung Vote-Buying Incident: Restage a vote-buying incident similar to the one in the December 2006 last Kaohsiung mayoral election (reftels) to accuse the KMT of vote buying in order to shift the support of swing voters from the KMT to the DPP.

(N) Faking a Scandalous Story about Ma Ying-jeou: Aim to destroy KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou's clean image by having a

woman carrying a child hold a press conference right before the election accusing Ma of fathering the child.

(O) Forging Messages from a God or Goddess: Spread forged divine messages from deities through various local temples to say the gods have divined that Frank Hsieh would be the next President.

(P) Creating another "228 Incident": On election day, arrange a conflict between elderly "ben-sheng" (Taiwanese) and "wai-sheng" (mainlanders), spreading the rumor on underground radios that "elderly Taiwanese men are being beaten up by mainlanders" as a means to get-out-the-vote.

Thiele

Young